



Designing new pathways for employability and entrepreneurship of Iraqi students in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

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QUALITY PLAN

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Project Summary

BANUU - Designing new pathways for employability and entrepreneurship of Iraqi students in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage is a three-year (2020-2023) international project funded by the European Union in the frame of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building Key Action 2 in the Field of Higher Education¹.

BANUU aims at contributing to the improvement of the students' employability in the field of Humanities in Iraq by creating new pathways of cooperation between Universities and the public and enterprise sectors. This will be the result of six specific practical objectives connected with the different Working Packages of the project:

1. Creation of a national framework for designing and implementing internships in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage in Iraq;
2. Creation of new pathways to enhance Iraqi students' transversal skills (focus on entrepreneurial skills);
3. Piloting of the new frameworks and pathways in 3 specific sectors: Preventive Archeology, Cultural Tourism, Cultural Heritage Management;
4. Re-drafting of the learning outcomes of Iraqi BA and MA degree programs involving external partners as co-producers of knowledge;
5. Strengthening of the relations between HEIs (Universities, Ministry) and the wider national economic and social environment;
6. Creating a favourable legal, administrative, and financial environment in which HEIs can draft comprehensive agreements and contracts with external partners.

The success of the project will be ensured by a series of integrated and multidimensional activities contained in three dedicated WPs:

WP8 - Quality control in action: This work package is aimed at establishing criteria, tools and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the project in terms of both processes and outputs. It is also aimed at the actual implementation of the stated quality control in line with the fixed strategies, the scheduled deliverables, and the budget.

WP9 - Dissemination of project results: The overarching goal of WP9 is to maximise the spread and dissemination of the project's results, with particular focus on WP2 (Internships framing), WP3 (Pilot internships), WP4 (Entrepreneurship activities framing), WP5 (Pilot entrepreneurship activities) and WP6 (Accreditations) outcomes. Please see the *Dissemination Plan* for further information.

WP10 - Ensuring project exploitation and sustainability: The overarching goal of this WP is to make project's results sustainable after the project lifetime. Please see the *Exploitation and Sustainability Plan* for further information.

¹ For further information, please visit https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/grants/2014-2020/erasmus_en.

1. Introduction

The impact assessment is an essential part of the project: it evaluates achievements and generates internal recommendations for future improvements. Indicators could be used to measure performance on the quantitative (numbers and percentages) and/or qualitative (quality of the experience) level.

The overarching goal of BANUU's WP8 is to establish criteria, tools and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the project in terms of both processes and outputs. WP8 is also aimed at the actual implementation of the stated quality control in line with the fixed strategies, the scheduled deliverables, and the budget. As a consequence, a series of tools and instruments will be used throughout the whole project's timeline in cooperation with Iraqi partners, which will be fully involved in the efforts to monitor and assess:

- The process, outputs, and deliverables of each WP;
- The general project management (included management bodies meetings, internal communication activities, and financial management); and
- The partners' participation in the project operations and the degree of satisfaction of users, target groups, and external stakeholders, in order to measure the impact of the project on the civil society at national level.

The aim of this document is to illustrate the project's quality assessment strategy, including the activities carried out for the first half of the project and those which will be developed until its end.

1.1 Involved partners

As WP8 is transversal to all project activities, the tasks foreseen will concern the whole consortium, with the following allocation of roles:

	Name	Acronym	Country	Role
P1	University of Bologna	UNIBO	Italy	Project Coordinator
P2	Koç University of Istanbul	KU	Turkey	WP8 Leader
P3	Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi Torino	CRAS	Italy	Partner
P4	University of Baghdad	UOB	Iraq	Partner
P5	University of Kufa	UOK	Iraq	Partner
P6	University of Qadisiyah	QU	Iraq	Partner
P7	University of Mosul	UOM	Iraq	Partner
P8	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	MHESR	Iraq	Partner

2. Quality and Monitoring Committee (QMC) and Quality Plan

According to the project proposal, the criteria, aims, procedures, tools and indicators for project evaluation shall be defined by a Quality Board. This Board, elected during the Kick-Off Meeting and renamed “Quality and Monitoring Committee” (QMC), is composed by a representative for each Consortium Partner:

- Emmanuel Di Tommaso (Administrative Staff Member – UNIBO);
- Oya Ozer (Administrative Staff Member – KU);
- Eleonora Quirico (Researcher – CRAFT);
- Laith Majeed Hussein (Administrative Staff Member – UOB);
- Haydear Kaream Al Hamdany (Administrative Staff member – UOK);
- Alaa Hachem (Administrative Staff member – QU);
- Rawaa Qasha (Administrative Staff member – UOM);
- Abduljaleel Mohamad Mageed (Administrative Staff Member – MHESR).

The QMC is in charge of the following objectives:

- To coordinate all the quality insurance activities;
- To realise the internal evaluations and monitor the external evaluations;
- To coordinate any quality monitoring missions.

The QMC will meet regularly and will report the outcomes of each monitoring activity to the Consortium Assembly, in order to adopt correction actions when necessary. The entire process is intended to follow the PDCA cycle: PLAN-DO-CHECK-ACT.

2.1 Specific tasks of the QMC

In order to reach the above mentioned objectives, four specific tasks have been identified for the QMC:

1. Elaboration of a Quality Plan;
2. Elaboration and adoption of questionnaires and assessment tools for participants during training courses using the UNIBO Feedback Server Program (in connection with other WPs), and organisation of quality monitoring visit to Iraq;
3. Appointment of 2 External Evaluation Experts (EEE) that will help monitor the level of satisfaction of participants, users and target groups and assess performance of the project;
4. Report on Quality activities and results through two specific documents:
 - a. Report on evaluation of results by project consortium;
 - b. Report(s) by EEES.

A draft of this Quality Plan has been shared and approved by all Partners. It provides solid ground for successful, timely and quality implementation of the project activities, and serves as a common standard to be applied and followed throughout the project life.

The Quality Plan states all the procedures and measures to be fulfilled in order to secure that:

- all partners are performing their tasks as agreed in the Consortium Assembly and in the Operational Committee meetings;
- all project activities are accomplished in accordance with the plan outlined in the Project Application;
- all project outcomes meet the quality standards set by the Consortium;
- all rights and obligations, stated in the Partnership Agreements, are satisfied.

3. Quality assessment activities: Evaluations and Monitoring Visits

The project foresees two types of evaluation: formative evaluation and summative evaluation. These evaluations will be carried out both internally and externally. This double level of evaluation leads to a total of four specific activities:

	Acronym	Name	Involved personnel
1	IFE	Internal Formative Evaluation	EU partners + Iraqi Universities
2	EFE	External Formative Evaluation	External Evaluation Expert
3	ISE	Internal Summative Evaluation	EU partners + Iraqi Universities
4	ESE	External Summative Evaluation	External Evaluation Expert

Moreover, during the whole project lifetime, experts from the EU BANUU programme country will travel to the four Iraqi partners to evaluate and control the project activities in order to guarantee their quality and to offer guidance in case of need.

Further information about the activities are provided in the following sections.

3.1 Internal formative evaluation (IFE)

The formative internal evaluations will be coordinated by the QMC. In particular, an Internal Formative Evaluations (IFE) will be issued by the QMC at the end of WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5 and WP6, and the results will be reported to the Consortium Assembly.

The internal evaluations aim at assessing the project performance and its development status according to established performance parameters, baselines, and deliverables as specified in the Logical Framework Matrix of the project proposal.



IFEs involve the whole project staff and aim at providing a step-by-step internal evaluation of the project to highlight positive achievements, weaknesses and issues that will be solved during General Assembly meetings. IFE provides validation for all the completed tasks.

Each IFE will take into consideration:

1. compliance with deadlines and project timetable;
2. delivery of products and reports in accordance with the project plan;
3. respect of the tasks distributed;
4. quality in the organisation of the events;
5. quality and effectiveness of the internal and external communication;
6. compliance with budget limitations and, in general, efficient and effective use of resources.

All these aspects will be evaluated by the QMC through ad-hoc questionnaires and interviews with all project staff and, when needed, with target groups. QMC will discuss the obtained results with the project coordinator and the Consortium Assembly in order to envisage opportune adjustments wherever weaknesses, deficiencies, and/or gaps were identified.

3.2 External Formative Evaluation (EFE)

The Consortium will subcontract 2 External Evaluation Experts (EEEs), to assess the quality of the implementation through external evaluations.

The first EEE will evaluate the general quality of the project implementation during the activities, focusing on each WP and its objectives. As a result of this External Formative Evaluation (EFE), the EEE will be required to produce a report, which will be discussed with the QMC and the Operational Committee, and finally distributed to the Consortium Assembly.

In this step, the appointed EEE will also have the responsibility to suggest corrective actions, should the foreseen outcomes not be in line with the set indicators and quality standards.

3.3 Internal Summative Evaluation (ISE)

An Internal Summative Evaluation (ISE) will be planned in the frame of the last project meeting. It will take place at the end of the project, and involve the whole project staff. The aim is producing a conclusive evaluation of the overall project by its staff, highlighting either positive accomplishments or weaknesses. This evaluation will result in a report, drafted by the QMC, used for future exploitation and sustainability actions.

3.4 External Summative Evaluation (ESE)

Finally, an External Summative Evaluation (ESE) will take place at the end of the project and will be carried out by the second appointed EEE.



Similarly to the EFE, the ESE will be discussed with the QMC and the Operational Committee before being distributed to Consortium Assembly meetings for a final review. The ESE report will evaluate the overall project, and will be published and disseminated to policy makers and external stakeholders. Its aim is to attest the project achievements, to detect the problems arisen during its implementation and the solutions found by the Consortium, and to provide suggestions for its exploitation and its future replications.

3.5 Monitoring Visits

During the project lifetime and accordingly to the evolution of the Covid-19 pandemics, members from the EU BANUU partners will travel to Iraq, in order to monitor the activities and to discuss with the involved personnel of the Iraqi universities (professors, students and administrative staff members) any possible problems that could arise during the project implementation.

At this moment, one monitoring visit has been carried out in the month of April 2021.

4. Activities carried out in the first half of the project and conclusions

The overall objective of the Quality Plan is to indicate the tools to be used by the whole Consortium, and specifically the QMC, to check the progress of the project step by step.

At present, quality control has been carried out for all the activities implemented so far, despite the slowdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, although it is important to stress how every challenge posed by the difficult Iraqi context has been solved by the partners thanks to a great cooperative spirit. Specifically:

- The QMC has been elected and the Quality Plan has been approved;
- An IFE has been carried out for WP1 and WP2, judging positively the implementation of both Working Packages; Partners were very satisfied with the organisation of the virtual WP2 training, even if they hope that the upcoming project activities will be realised in presence. Regarding WP1, the data collected have been considered relevant and coherent, and the Iraqi partners recommended to keep monitoring and updating these data as the Iraqi cultural sector is subject to continuous changes;
- One monitoring visit has taken place in the month of April 2021, bringing two UNIBO experts to all four Iraqi universities, identifying some difficulties encountered by the academic and administrative staff, and proposing possible solutions.
- One EEE has been appointed for the external evaluation of WP1, WP2, WP4 and WP5, which is currently ongoing;
- The WP4 internal evaluation is currently ongoing.

The QMC will continue to meet regularly in the following months, in order to carry out the foreseen quality assessment activities and to ensure a successful implementation of the project.